



# Enhancing New case appointment Templates (ENT)

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## Introduction

Long waiting time for medical care is always a challenge, especially in the public sectors. The issue is especially challenging for a Children's Hospital as the appointment often involves several other factors, including caregiver **availability**, the level of parental **anxiety** and the **urgency** of the illness.

Securing an ENT new case appointment was constantly an issue with appointment waiting time often stretched beyond 70 calendar days.

A multi-disciplinary project team consisting of physicians, nurses, and operations and Call Centre staff was formed to review the ENT appointment waiting time issue.

## Objectives

Revamping of ENT new case appointment templates to reduce waiting time for appointment by **30%** and boosting operational efficiency at cross departmental level.

## Methodology

Ishikawa diagram (Figure 1) was used to brainstorm and identify the root causes of the issue. The project team focused on the ENT subsidised appointment waiting time. Insight gatherings, past reports and statistics of the appointment wait time were collected and studied to develop the Ishikawa Diagram.

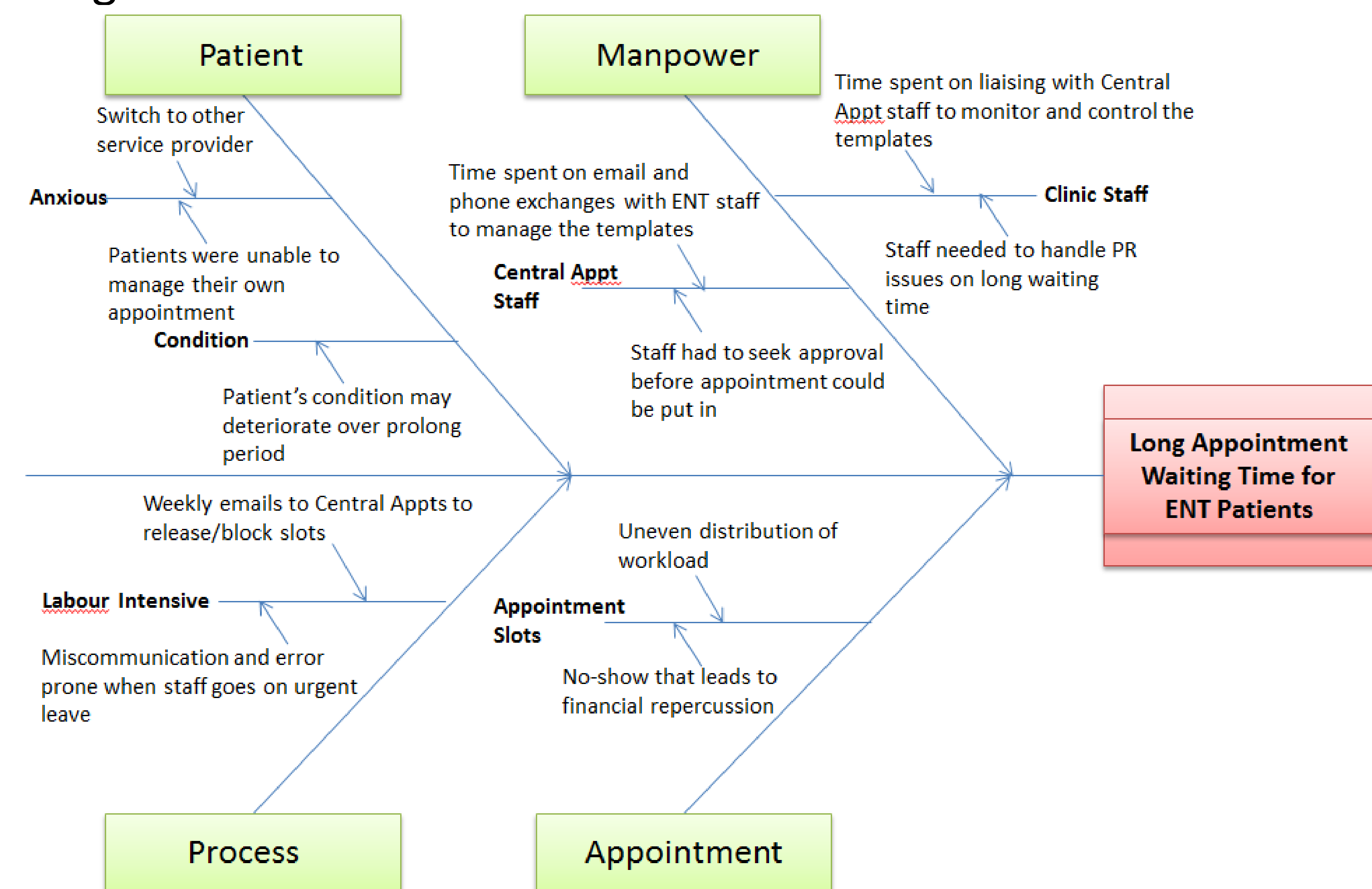


Figure 1: Ishikawa Diagram for RCA of Long ENT Appointment Waiting Time

## Results

The twelve months retrospective data indicates a drastic improvement in the ENT new case appointment waiting time. The average appointment waiting time prior to the template enhancement was at an average of 77 calendar days. After the new template implementation in September 2017, the average reduced to 18.5 calendar days, which equates to **76% improvement!**

The total number of emails sent from Central Appointments staff to ENT also **reduced tremendously**. From an average of 453 emails to an average of 150 emails per month. Nurses are no longer being bogged down by appointment related queries and can now focus all their attention on handling patient-care related issues.

The revamped template also means our patients are able to better manage their appointment via the SingHealth Electronic and Mobile (E&M) Appointment Services. **Patients are empowered** to check, schedule, change or cancel their existing medical appointments online, at their fingertips anytime, anywhere.

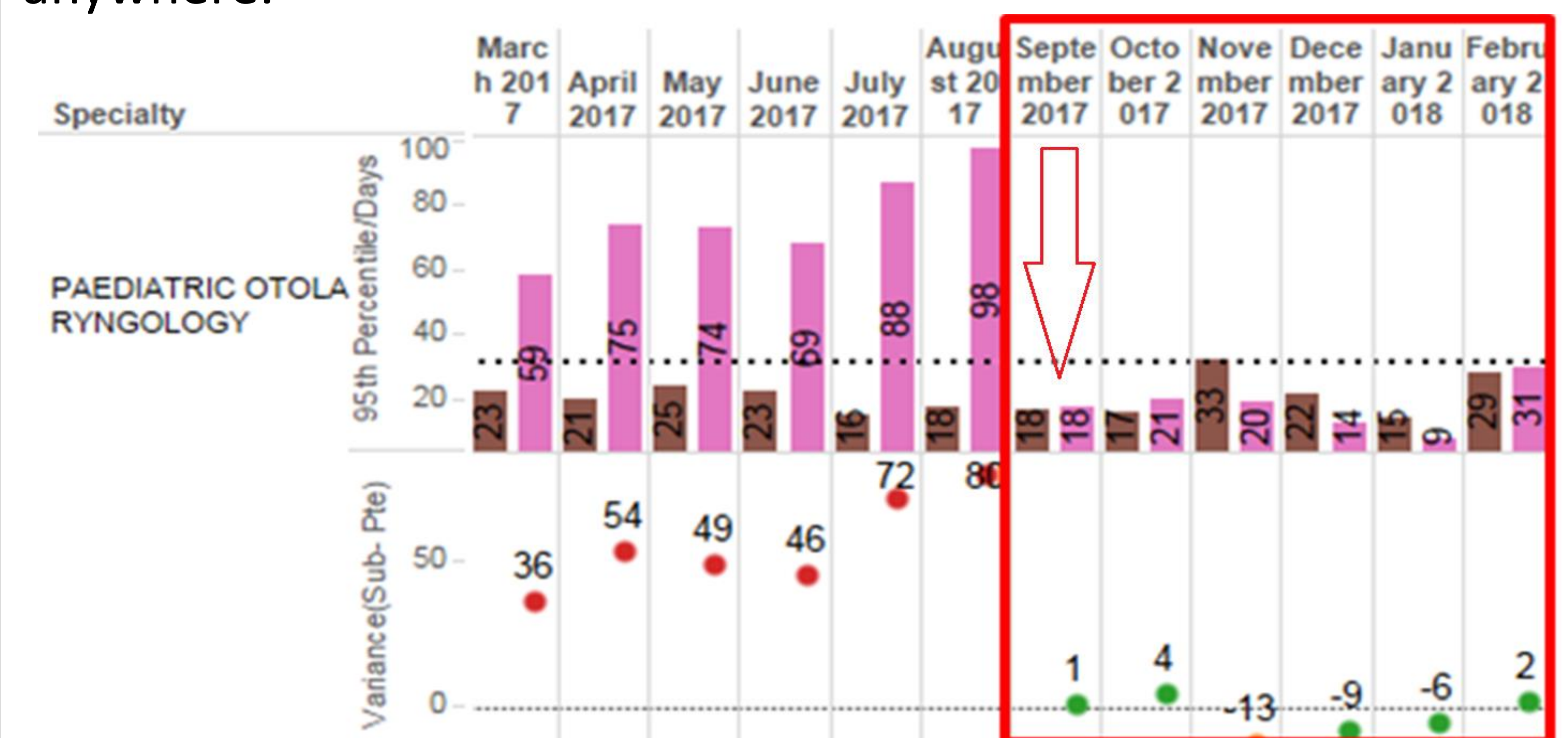


Figure 2: Waiting time for ENT appointment at 95th percentile (days).

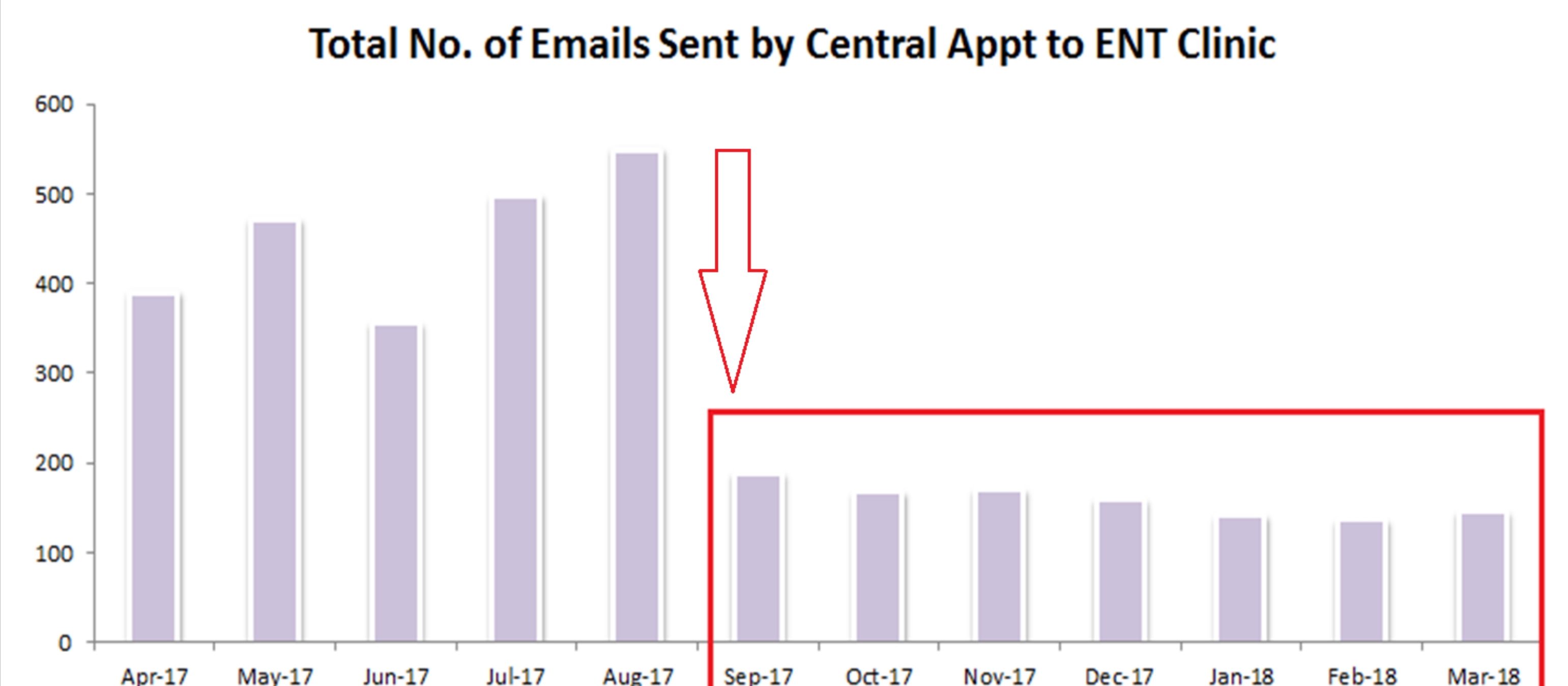


Figure 3: Total number of emails from Central Appts to ENT (month)

## Conclusion

Leveraging system and technology is the key to improving process. Not only did this enhancement meet the objectives set to reduce the ENT new case appointment waiting time and boosting efficiency, it also provided the opportunity to draw patients closer to us by allowing them easier and faster accessibility to our hospital. It is also through this revamp that we improved on our staff efficiency and productivity at cross departmental level. A win-win solution for all, we say.